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Time to Put the Spotlight on The CIA In Laos

Twenty-one U.S. Senators are sponsors of Senate Joint Resolution 77 to set up a Joint Committee on Intelligence,* which would supervise the CIA. The resolution has been before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee for several months without action. This would be a good time to demand hearings on the bill and to make those hearings a vehicle for an inquiry into CIA activities in Laos. A Washington dispatch in *The Times* of London May 24 (see adjoining box) declares that the CIA has been sabotaging U.S. policy and encouraging Phoumi Nosavan, the rightist leader, to resist Administration efforts to create a new neutralist coalition regime. The story reverberated in the foreign policy debate which took place later that day in the House of Commons, but so scanty was the attention paid it by the U.S. press that many Senators here with a sharp interest in the CIA are unaware of the charges. They are similar to those in *Le Monde* (Dec. 17-18) which we reported in our issue of last January 8. According to an on-the-spot survey in that paper, the efforts of the U.S. Ambassador to bring Phoumi into the coalition were undercut by CIA agents and the U.S. military.

Phoumi's Closest U.S. Adviser A CIA Man

The London *Times* story was denied by Lincoln White, the State Department's briefing officer. But Senators who inquire in those sections of the Department in touch with Laotian affairs will find that in this, as in the case of the U-2, Mr. White has been erroneously informed. The U.S. press has not been at all enterprising in going after the story. The London *Observer* (May 27) in reporting the denial added a tantalizing detail. "It is true," its Washington correspondent cabled, "that the chief CIA operator [in Laos] is still the same man as when the agency supported General Phoumi. . . ." The paper's correspondent in Singapore added that while it was incorrect to accuse the CIA of undercutting U.S. policy in Laos the individual CIA representatives there—

are privately opposed to a compromise with the neutralists and pro-Communists. They urge that if necessary the country be partitioned . . . or that the Vientiane government should at least be helped to retain full control of towns and principal communications, even at the risk of war. This view encourages right-wing Laotian leaders to refuse to come to terms with their enemies—particularly as Gen. Phoumi's closest personal American adviser is a senior CIA officer.

Our own inquiries have led us to believe that the *Times* account is correct. Thailand has long been a CIA stronghold, as was indicated some years ago when the Burmese government complained that CIA operatives were using a trading

* The 21 are: McCarthy, Anderson, Morse, Clark, Metcalf, Burdick, Bartlett, McNamara, Humphrey, Carroll, Long (Mo), Moss, McGee, Talmadge, Hickey, Case (S. Dak), Pell, Prouty, Young (Ohio), Hart and Williams (N.J.).

What the London Times Reported

"It is not easy to acquire all the details in such a murky situation, but apparently the evidence shows that the swarm of CIA agents in Laos deliberately opposed the official American objectives of trying to establish a neutral government. They are believed to have encouraged General Phoumi Nosavan in the concentration of troops [in Nam Tha] that brought about the swift and disastrous response of the Pathet Lao.

"It is also officially believed that the heavy pressure brought upon Prince Boun Oum and General Phoumi to accept the political solution of neutrality, including the suspension since February of the monthly subsidy of \$3 million, failed because the agency provided them with some funds from its own capacious budget. The belief is that the agency transferred the money from its operations in Siam, where General Phoumi has family connections.

"It will be recalled that the CIA played a large role in bringing about the downfall of Prince Souvanna Phouma, who was ousted by the General in 1960. . . . The result of their clandestine efforts is the defeat, and perhaps total demoralization of the Royal Laotian forces; the commitment of American forces on the Asian mainland and a deterioration of the political situation. . . ."

—*The Times* (London) from Washington, May 24

company in northern Thailand as a cover to funnel supplies across the border to Chinese Nationalist troops in Burma. The Cuban affair last year should be a reminder that the White House is not always either well-informed or really obeyed by the CIA; a pro-Batista CIA agent, and an ignoramus on Latin American affairs to boot, went on in charge of operations at Miami long after authoritative sources at the White House assured reporters that he had been removed. It is difficult enough to get the State Department only a few blocks away to carry out White House directives which run counter to cold war conditioning. It would be naive to believe that secret operatives in so huge and well-heeled an organization as the CIA meekly carry out orders with which they are not in accord. The Laotian affair would not only provide a test case with which to evaluate the proposal for a joint committee on intelligence, it would also throw a scare into the gumshoe operators and help the White House bring the Laotian negotiations to a successful conclusion. There is no reason why the chief CIA man in Laos cannot be brought before a secret session of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee for questioning.

To read the London *Times* parliamentary report which has just arrived here of the foreign affairs debate May 24 is to

(Continued on Page Four)

Too Few Listen As Freedom Riders and Sit-In'ers Tell Their Dramatic Story . . .

Norman Thomas, who back-stopped Mrs. Roosevelt as chairman of the Committee of Inquiry, spoke of them as "secular saints"—this handful of young Negroes in their teens and early twenties. They and a few white sympathizers as youthful and devoted as themselves have begun a social revolution in the South with their sit-ins and their Freedom Rides. In the sparsely filled small *Washington Post* Community Room last week-end they told their story and their needs to a "Committee of Inquiry Into the Administration of Justice in the Freedom Struggle." To it Mrs. Roosevelt, now bowed in body but tireless as ever in spirit, not only lent her name as chairman but flew to Washington and presided over the first day's session.

A Minority of A Minority

In the boxes on these two pages, in succinct summaries more moving than any eloquence, we provide glimpses in their own words of what they have encountered since that first sit-in at a Greensboro, N.C., lunch counter in Feb. 1960. A report and a transcript of the two-day hearing will be published. They will provide the first comprehensive view of the movement which has sparked Negro resistance to white supremacy in the deep South for the first time since Reconstruction. Never has a tinier minority done more for the liberation of a whole people than these few youngsters of CORE (Congress for Racial Equality) and SNCC (Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee.)

The sit-ins and the Freedom Rides have done something else, less sensational but more universally significant. As Mr. Thomas said in his summation, "they have fought entrenched discrimination and wrong without themselves indulging in violence and done this in one of the most violent periods of human history." Everywhere else in recent years, terrorism has been accepted as a justifiable weapon in liberation struggles. From Palestine and Cyprus to Algeria and Indonesia, the

Ferdinand the Bull (Connor)

"The driver [at Anniston, Ala.] announced he would not drive on until the four Negroes of our party went to the back of the bus. They refused. The whites [mobsters] then went to work on the four Negroes. Walter Bergman, also white, and I went forward to talk to the attackers. They slugged Walter Bergman on the head and dragged him to the back of the bus. I was similarly slugged and dragged. The Negroes were dragged to the rear also. We maintained non-violence. I saw no police near the bus. The bus then left for Birmingham.

"Walter Bergman's injuries have since resulted in a stroke. He is the most serious Freedom Ride casualty. At the Birmingham station a mob awaited us, their pipes wrapped in paper. No police were in sight. In an alley away from spectators, I was beaten unconscious. Police Chief Bull Connor of Birmingham explained later that we had no protection because his men were off for Mother's Day."

—Testimony of James Peck (white) to Committee of Inquiry; he is editor of *CORE Bulletin*.

knife, the bomb, the nocturnal attack, haphazard violence often at the expense of the very people being liberated, have been taken for granted.

Here in the United States the struggle against the imposed humiliation of the Negro has been carried out in Gandhi's spirit, with successful non-violence. History will record it to the honor of the Negro and of our country but too few are aware of it today. The hearings themselves attested in unintended fashion the degree to which this has been the work of a minority of a minority. Though Washington is the seat of Howard University and all through the South students have been aroused to act in this struggle, only a few local Negro students turned out. The NAACP did not even send an observer. A. Philip Randolph lent his name but not his

Life for the Non-Servile Negro in the South 99 Years After Emancipation

Order In A Georgia Court

"Early in March 1962 I appeared before the Dougherty County Superior Court in Albany with four clients, to answer charges of conspiracy to commit breach of the peace. Court was in session, the judge on the bench. My clients Chas. Sherrod and Charles Jones, Negro, and Robert Zellner and Thomas Hayden, white, with Mrs. Hayden, took seats in the second row from the front. A deputy sheriff asked them to move to the rear [where Negroes sit]. As they got up to do so, the sheriff pushed Sherrod with force to the floor and dragged him on the floor to the rear. Two officers then seized Zellner [who had angered them by also moving back to the Negro section though he is white], by the trousers and the collar and dragged him from the courtroom. While Zellner was on the floor in the hall, he was hit. Mrs. Hayden was dragged over 3 or 4 seats and carried into a room behind the court. All this while the Judge sat on the bench watching and never said a word."

—C. E. King, Negro attorney, Albany, Ga.

See No Evil, Hear No Evil

"Police arrested me and four other students for illegal use of a sound-truck. We were held in Baton Rouge Parish jail under \$1500 cash bond each. My attorneys bonded me out in the evening. As the group left the jail's second floor and got to the first they were detained. I was rearrested for conspiracy to commit criminal mischief, and returned to jail. I remained in jail, awaiting bond, for 21 days. Jail

atmosphere was hostile; I was denied consultation with ministers, mail and use of telephone. After making three requests one day to see a doctor I was slapped and choked. Jerome Smith, a fellow CORE prisoner was hit with a judo chop and Dave Dennis, who inquired about these incidents, was pulled from the Negro cell area, thrown with force against iron bars and placed in solitary. An FBI inquiry concluded that there had been no violation of civil rights."

—Ronnie Moore, 21, chairman of Baton Rouge CORE

Fun and Frolic At A Fair

"On the 16th Oct. 1961, fourteen of us were at the Miss. State Fair grounds at Jackson to see if the [Negro] boycott was a success. We asked people going in if they knew about the boycott, if they felt they should take second best, if they knew they were paying for leftovers [only the last 3 days of the Fair are for Negroes]. Police gathered around us yelling vulgar language and told us to move on. They arrested 7 of us before we had a chance to move. Then police came toward the Fair entrance with 3 police dogs. They went up the hill with the dogs, running people away from the Fair. One dog got loose and chased people on his own. There were about 300 or 400 people there in front of a band. I heard a dog attacked and bit a man who was hospitalized. We were put in the paddy wagon and at the Jackson jail charged with breach of the peace. . . ."

—Charles McLaurin, 21, Jackson, Miss.

... Police Dogs, Savage Mobs, Sadistic Cops, Fail to Halt Liberation Movement

presence. There was only one Negro on the panel either day, Dr. Kenneth Clark, the New York City College psychologist the first day; Rev. Gardner Taylor, a Brooklyn Baptist pastor, the second.*

The record, when published, will show the widespread use of dogs by the police to terrorize Negroes; the lawlessness and sadism of Southern police officials; the inability to get the FBI to do anything about police brutality; the appointment of White Citizens Council members to the Federal bench; the use of heavy bail requirements as a means of crippling the sit-in movement, and undercover pressure from State agencies in Mississippi, to frighten bonding companies away from Freedom Ride cases.

James Farmer, CORE's impressive leader, testified that the Southern Regional Council estimates that there have been

* Others who lent their names but did not appear included Walter Reuther. Unlike Reuther, Wm. Schnitzler, secretary-treasurer of the AFL-CIO, at least sent a substitute, Boris Shishkin. The other name-lenders non-appearing were: Talullah Bankhead, Harry Golden, Bishop James A. Pike, Justine Wise Polier, and James Wechsler. Those who sat in on the hearings part of the time were Telford Taylor and Joseph L. Rauh, Jr. Those who sat through the whole two days in addition to Norman Thomas were Roger Baldwin and John B. Culbertson, a devoted white attorney from Greenville, S.C. Rowland Watts of the ACLU and Carl Rachlin of CORE acted as counsel for the hearing board.

Segregation by Revelation

"In situations like this, I always ask myself, what would Jesus do, and therefore I have contemplated on this for a while, and I must ask you to leave."

—White Methodist Minister in Alabama to Negro sit-in demonstrators in his church, from Committee of Inquiry testimony, May 25.

5,181 arrests since the sit-ins began and that between two and three million dollars have had to be raised to bail them out. Louis Lusky, once a law clerk to Justice Cardozo, now a practicing lawyer in Louisville, Ky., defense counsel in the famous Carl Braden sedition case, testified that in the mass arrests of Freedom Riders in Jackson, Miss., total bond requirements reached \$373,000 and not a single bonding company was willing to put up bond.

Such tactics and the new use of criminal anarchy charges (on which we will report more fully in a later issue) are aimed to crush the movement. But it has succeeded in awakening Negroes even in Mississippi to the possibility of fighting for their rights and dignity. Most important of all, as Mr. Lusky said in his deeply felt testimony, it has broken the comfortable white Southern stereotype of the Negro as a less-than-human creature ill disposed to fight for his emancipation.

What Happens to White Men Who Try to Help the Negro's Struggle in the South

"On November 9, 1961, I went with 5 members of New Orleans CORE into lower Mississippi to test compliance with the ICC ruling at bus stations. [They were arrested in Poplarville, scene of the Mack Parker lynching.] About 50 Poplarville whites crowded the room behind the fire station at our trial November 13. The arresting officer testified he had wanted to kill me. In the courtroom, he tried several times to attack me, but was restrained by his friends. We were found guilty of disturbing the peace, and having posted \$500 bond apiece, were about to leave. The district attorney, who meant to keep me in town overnight, now charged me with interfering with an officer. Our judge, also the Mayor, observing the crowd's temper, found me innocent and told my lawyer to get me out of town quick."

—Testimony of Frank Nelson, 23-year old white engineer from New York City, member of CORE.

"Early in August, 1961, George Blevins, John Dolan and myself, all white, were in New Orleans after serving 40 days in the Parchman, Miss., prison as Freedom Riders. In New Orleans we stayed at the home of a Negro minister where we were awaiting dinner when several police entered, said they had complaints about whites and Negroes being together, creating a disturbance. . . . They had no warrant; they told us to come with them. We asked if they had the right to take us out of a private home. They said we had no rights; that when they say come, we'd better come.

"At a police station . . . the police made the three of us stand facing a wall and hit us with blackjacks. About 20 police were watching. We were taken upstairs in the station to be photographed, finger-printed and questioned. The officer who had hit George Blevins asked about the blood on George's shirt; George said he had a head wound. The officer grabbed George by the hair, said 'where', felt with unclean hands into the cut and tore it open; later George had four stitches. This officer told me he would kill me if he saw me again in the city."

—Same witness

"On Jan. 22, 1962, Marshall Kieth, 27, white, a technical writer at the Redstone Arsenal [Huntsville, Ala.] who had

joined CORE in sit-ins, was at home reading. At midnight two men entered, stuck a gun in his back, blindfolded him, took him to a remote part of town, partially stripped him, beat him and sprayed him with oil of mustard. Kieth got to a nearby home; police were summoned. Kieth was hospitalized in much pain. He had grown up in Huntsville; his parents, he told me, had received threatening phone calls. To protect them and because he could not bear the harassment, Kieth left Huntsville to take up his life elsewhere, and left us no forwarding address."

—Testimony of Henry Thomas, 20, St. Augustine, Fla., a Field Secretary for CORE. He had to be hospitalized after someone put mustard gas on the seat of his car while he was directing sit-ins in Huntsville. Police took no action except to impound his car as evidence!

"During January 1962 I taught some of the sharecroppers [evicted in Brownsville, Tenn., for trying to register to vote] to make tote bags for sale. Police went to the home of Negroes with whom I was staying and questioned them about me. On Friday, March 3, Jeff Gordon and I started to drive to Memphis to get materials for the bags. We had gone about four blocks when Sheriff's men told us to drive to the courthouse. . . . They refused to say why. . . .

"We refused to move and when police grabbed us went limp. We were dragged out, heads bouncing, stuffed into a police car and taken to jail. After about three hours in a cell, police came to fingerprint us. They dragged Jeff out by a wrist clamp which is very painful and leaves the wrist torn. Because of the injustice of the proceedings I could not cooperate even to the degree of holding my fingers still for inking. I was beaten by Deputy Anderson and four others, some in blue uniforms, some in plainclothes. The wrist clamp was screwed down to the screaming point and shaken. My fingers were bent back, my pants torn or slashed off, and a high voltage electric probe applied. During the beating I passed out several times but was revived each time by slaps so the torture could continue."

—Testimony of Eric Weinberger, 30, of Norwich, Conn., who is back with the croppers in Tennessee.

How Use The CIA For Settlement When It's Conditioned to Conflict?

(Continued from Page One)

realize again how numb and dumb our Congress has grown on issues of war and peace. In England the government was subjected to sharp questioning by the Labor opposition; the Prime Minister, incidentally, failed to deny that the initial request for British troops to Thailand came not from the Thais but from the White House. Here not only is there no opposition but little informed support for the constructive aspect of U.S. policy—the President's and Mr. Harriman's search for a peaceful solution via a neutral coalition in Laos.

His Own Little "China Lobby"

Phoumi Nosavan has his little "China Lobby" on the hill; Sen. Dodd made a speech in the Senate May 21 supporting him and opposing a coalition. The same view was taken a week earlier by Senator Jackson on ABC-TV's *Issues and Answers* (May 13). It is curious how this unfailing voice of the aviation lobby should pipe up on Laos, as if his industrial advisers and military connections scent and fear the relaxation of tension a settlement might bring. The liberals in the Senate could at least build up countervailing pressure in support of the President's coalition policy by some energetic questioning on the role of the CIA and the military in Laos. What did happen at Nam Tha? How was Phoumi Nosavan able to concentrate forces in this rat trap over the objections of U.S. military? Who started the fighting? How much real fighting was there? Was the purpose of this comedy to precipitate U.S. intervention? Is it true, as reported from the scene, that the Royal Laotian officers refused to let their U.S. advisers know the full facts about the numbers and deployment of their troops? This is an old U.S. complaint in Laos. The Porter Hardy subcommittee investigation of the Laotian aid program two years ago showed that U.S. auditing agencies were never able to learn exactly how many men were in the Lao Army. There was no way to check on how much pay was going to troops and how much into the pockets of Laotian leaders. If CIA is good for intelligence and not just for intrigue, it ought to have the answers on all these questions. The answers would help to explain why the Royal Lao Army we armed is not able to stand off inferior forces equipped with cast-offs not just in guerrilla operations but in open battle.

Unhappy With Our 'Strong Man'

Q. Do you have any comment on the ticker reports that the United States has told Boun Oum to get rid of [Gen. Phoumi] Nosavan?

A. The statement attributed to Gov. Harriman in this report that Gen. Phoumi "must quit the government" is untrue. We have, however, urged all along that the Royal Lao government undertake to move ahead promptly and realistically on negotiations for a government of national union under Souvanna Phouma.

Q. What does it mean to move ahead promptly and realistically? Does it mean Phoumi must go? (Laughter).

A. It means just that the negotiations should be undertaken promptly and realistically.

Q. Well, it has been said many times in this town in the last two weeks that the reason they didn't move ahead promptly and realistically was that Gen. Phoumi didn't agree with some of the things the U.S. wanted to do. . . . Have we suggested that perhaps Gen. Phoumi who is a military man might consider better serving his country as head of the army in the field instead of as a Cabinet officer?

A. I don't think I can go further than what I have said already. . . .

—State Dept. Press Briefing, May 24

How does a defeated Lao leader with no visible means of support stand off U.S. pressure as long and easily as Phoumi has done? He can't be *that* slick. He's obviously playing for a final breakdown in the coalition talks and partition of Laos by U.S. troops. This would cut up his country but leave his pipeline to the U.S. Treasury intact. But he could hardly play this game if it did not suit more powerful interests. The agreement between Kennedy and Khrushchev over Laos is the one frail bridge to the beginnings of a general settlement between the two superpowers. If it breaks down and our troops move into Laos, the hope vanishes. Those who see this hope as a menace, the believers in inevitable conflict, the military-industrial complex, the desperadoes like Chiang Kai-shek, pull the strings to which Phoumi prances. Now, before it is too late, is the time to recall that the CIA from McCone down is conditioned not to settlement but to permanent conflict. This is the heart of the matter.

May 29

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